

## BOOKS AND AUTHORS REVIEWS AND COMMENT

LITERARY CRITICISM  
AND BOOK NEWSMore War Books—Pleasant Reminiscences of  
Early Victorian Days: Phiz and His  
Circle—East and West.

## MORE WAR BOOKS.

GERMANY EMBATTLED. An American Interpretation. By Oswald Garrison Villard. 12mo. Pp. 320. Charles Scribner's Sons.

This is a war of many paradoxes. That of the alliance between England and Russia in the name of civilization and democracy, for instance. But the one upon which American attention has been concentrated from the first is that of the duality of the German Empire—the combination there of a most advanced civilization with what, for lack of a better word, is currently called "autocracy," though it certainly is not that. In science, in industry, above all, in the solution of economic problems, in the establishment of workable balances between the interests of capital and labor, Germany has led the way, although the mass of her people have never yet had what to the American mind is their due share in the direction of the nation's affairs. This duality, which never seems to have troubled the Germans in peace, has disappeared since the outbreak of the war. Germany, as Mr. Villard points out, and here is still another paradox—has become in the supreme hour at once a united democracy—the nation under arms—and a no less united autocracy, to repeat the word that, while incorrect, is yet the only one to express the American point of view.

Attempts to interpret this paradoxical Germany to us have been many during the last decade or so, for some of the best works on the subject were written long ago. But, instead of turning to these undervalued neglected volumes on the outbreak of the war, we took up instead new books and pamphlets, written to fit the occasion and the cause—chiefly of the Allies—in so far as we did not look exclusively to our daily press, not so much for guidance, as for confirmation of our opinions formed long ago. For, as confessed, the attitude of the great majority of us toward the Kaiser and his people in this war was not born overnight. Its seeds had long been maturing below the surface during the long years of peace.

Thus we have the ever-growing mass of ex parte testimony, of accusations and counter charges, denunciations and justifications, assertions of the highest motives with which England and Germany have flooded our book markets and filled the columns of our press. That the German propaganda has been true is unmistakably true; it may even be added that it has done more harm than good. It has practically come to an end with the ill-considered meeting of a handful of German-Americans and Americans of German

descent in Washington, whose loud and lurid flash in the pan has served to clear the American atmosphere once for all.

Mr. Villard deals in his book, first of all, with this duality of the German Empire; he does not solve the paradox, but he states it as clearly as can be done from the American point of view, and in doing this he explains also why the American majority cannot side with Germany. His book balances admirably with what he considers to be the danger of its militarism, its autocracy, and he looks forward to a Germany mended, not ended, to a peaceful popular reformation, not a revolution, the ultimate result of this war, the abolition of the militarism of the world.

It is a noble hope. To Mr. Villard it is far more a confident expectation that may be realized soon by the moral influence of the United States when the time shall come to formulate the terms of peace. One has his doubts, however, and so has Mr. Villard himself, for he, too, sees a possibility of what is to less idealistic pacifists already a certainty—that Russian militarism and English navalism, having crushed Germany's military strength and her growing fleet, will refuse to consider disarmament. And with this possibility—this certainty, we may call it—before our eyes, Mr. Villard's argument fails to the ground that for the United States "to rush into extensive preparations for war would be to rob the nation of its vast moral prestige." You ask us to disarm, would be the answer, "when you are arming as never before." Only a month or two ago Yves Guyot pointedly warned us in "The North American Review" that no neutral nation in the Old World or the New will be allowed to have a voice in the formulation of the terms of peace. It is our duty, then, to place ourselves in an adequate state of defence to meet whatever new militarism is sure to succeed the old.

"The Audacious War" has the inevitable shortcomings of correspondence written from week to week, to which is added the stamper of permanence that publication in book form is supposed to bestow. Some of this material is already out of date; some of its prophecies have already been disproved. On the other hand, the kernel of its contents, its financial, commercial and economic information, remains of the utmost value to the student of the history of the war. The author is hearty, bitterly anti-German. It has been said that this is, first of all, a trade war, and Mr. Barron agrees with this view; only, he maintains, it is not England, but Germany, which precipitated it. The empire's determination to force upon Russia a renewal of unfavorable commercial treaties two years hence is, according to him, at the bottom of it all. He repeats, in permanent book form, the statement made by him while travelling in Europe late last year, "at France and Russia possess military geniuses whose very names are as yet unknown to the world. It is certainly time, then, to give them their opportunity, especially in Russia. It is somewhat of an anti-climax to be told, apropos of an anti-climax, that he is, apropos of the German determination to see this war through, that "when a citizen has been so long notified that where he could formerly get a train for home every fifteen minutes, the railroad has been taken for military service, and he must get his supper in town, there is not the slightest word of complaint. He only wishes he could contribute more to the empire."

The statistics of orders for war supplies given by the Allies to American manufacturers are fairly staggering; according to the author, they may



MR. PECKSNIFF (FROM "PHIZ AND HIS CIRCLE" BY DICKENS; DODD, MEAD &amp; CO.)

reach the billion-dollar mark before the end of the struggle. Like Mr. Villard, Mr. Barron warns us against armaments; like him, he believes that out of this world war peace may come; indeed, "the boon of an international civilization is right at our doors, if the United States would only welcome it and join it." What simpler, he asks, than a Hague tribunal "enforcing peace with such parts of the world's armies and navies as it may need to enforce its decrees?" And once more one doubts the vision.

International espionage in general is stripped of its glamor in the anonymous British ex-intelligence officer's book about the German spy system. He presents it as exactly what it is—a sordid, dishonorable business, carried on on a business basis, for pay. Those looking for the romance of it must return to the fiction and the melodrama whence they have drawn their notions of the work. The fascinating adventures tempting ambassadors and chiefs of staff to their doom in luxurious metropolitan drawing-rooms is a myth. As a matter of fact, the more one learns of the whole business the more he comes to doubt its usefulness. Twenty years ago Russia was supposed to have filled all Europe with her secret agents; the Russo-Japanese War shifted the suspicion to the conquerors of the Far East. There was a spy case in this country, especially in our naval establishment. Now the turn of the Germans has come. How much their spy system has accomplished for them, or is accomplishing, the present highly respectable original of Miss Womack, who, as Foster tells us, objected so strongly to Dickens's misrepresentation of her character in "David Copperfield" that he made amendments in the thirty-second chapter of the book. Physically, Dickens's picture of her was not a caricature, but a portrait. The Brownes once revived her with a glass of sherry, and she had narrowly escaped an accident. She sat on the lowest stair rocking her body to and fro, saying as a sort of refrain between sips, "You see, the body is so long, and the legs are so short, and the stairs are difficult, all quite in the genuine Dickensian manner." Altogether, this is an entertaining chronicle of small beer.

The revelations made in these pages are confined to what is actually known of the German spy system, military, naval and diplomatic. The chapter on "agents provocateurs," to whom the author credits the promotion of strikes and syndicalism in England and France in moments of diplomatic danger, he frankly admits, mostly based on surmise.

HABLOT K. BROWNE.  
An English Illustrator and His Contemporaries.

PHIZ AND DICKENS. As They Appeared in Edgar's House. With original illustrations by Hablot K. Browne. 8vo. Pp. 312. Dodd, Mead & Co.

Mr. Browne modestly calls his book a chronicle of little beer, which it is, but it must be added that it is a very entertaining chronicle indeed. If it adds very little to our knowledge of Dickens, or of Phiz, or of the other Victorian novelists whose works he illustrated, Lever and Harrison Ainsworth first among them, it keeps us in a pleasantly reminiscent mood, and, furthermore, there are the reproductions of Phiz's drawings and water-colors to look at. And there is an interesting chapter on the artist's methods of etching and wood engraving.

Mr. Browne tells us his childhood reminiscences, gives us incidentally a fragmentary life of his father, plumpies of the great ones who visited him, and, above all, some charming pictures of early Victorian home life. These were the days of large families, of simple hearty living, and of a feeling of unquestionable superiority over all foreigners. The theatre was still looked upon somewhat askance. The roast beef of Old England did not yet come from America, entrees were called "made dishes," and in some houses taboos as "kicksaws," food fit only for foreigners. There was a



JAMES LANE ALLEN ("THE SWORD OF YOUTH"; CENTURY CO.)

firm belief in the virtues of port as a tonic; formal dinner parties were rare, but there was a great deal of informal dining together in a casual way. The dinner hour varied surprisingly; sometimes it fell at noon, again late in the evening, and nobody seemed to mind, not even the cook. "This kind of irregularity," Mr. Browne affirms, "was not peculiar to us, on account of the artistic temperament of the head of the household. It was more or less common at this period. The railway has been the great promoter of regularity and punctuality." Means of illumination were most primitive.

Of the Victorian worthies whom the child saw in his father's house, Dickens and Ainsworth impressed him most by their magnificence. Lever, of whom he saw least, he remembers best. Young Ruskin was greatly attached to his aunt, "a vehement young man who would lead in her long screeds in manuscript, and who would sometimes set the whole household running about fetching coats, brushes, paper, that he might on the spur of the moment copy a flower from the conservatory. He was supposed to be brilliantly clever." Mr. Browne ekes out his own reminiscences with those of others who reached the actors, Macready, Fechter, Phelps, while the latter, in his career, carried the tragedian into private life. Robinson and others.

Dickensians can dip again into the Leigh Hunt-Harold Skimpole affair; and they may learn something of the highly respectable original of Miss Womack, who, as Foster tells us, objected so strongly to Dickens's misrepresentation of her character in "David Copperfield" that he made amendments in the thirty-second chapter of the book. Physically, Dickens's picture of her was not a caricature, but a portrait. The Brownes once revived her with a glass of sherry, and she had narrowly escaped an accident. She sat on the lowest stair rocking her body to and fro, saying as a sort of refrain between sips, "You see, the body is so long, and the legs are so short, and the stairs are difficult, all quite in the genuine Dickensian manner." Altogether, this is an entertaining chronicle of small beer.

EAST AND WEST  
A Philosopher's Impressions  
of the World Around.

APPEARANCES. Notes of Travel, East and West. By H. G. Wells. 12mo. Pp. 221. Doubleday, Page & Co.

Mr. Dickinson, seeking the root of the matter, is never happy. He has the happy knack of suggesting so much more than he will positively state; he knows how to make us his willing co-laborers, as deeply interested as he is himself. The enduring meaning of East and West, this is the ultimate goal of his questioning. A homogeneous West he sees, but as to the East he doubts. There is India—that is the East; but China and Japan are nearer to us than to him, he opines.

Life is an evil; that is the root feeling of India; and the escape is either, for of suggesting so much more than he will positively state; he knows how to make us his willing co-laborers, as deeply interested as he is himself. The enduring meaning of East and West, this is the ultimate goal of his questioning. A homogeneous West he sees, but as to the East he doubts. There is India—that is the East; but China and Japan are nearer to us than to him, he opines.

Throughout Mr. Dickinson draws a remarkably revealing picture of the English national character, especially of the limitations that have made the race what it is and what it stands for the world over. Elsewhere he gives us the Indian Mahometan in a little sketch that is worthy of being placed beside Kipling's "On the City Wall." For the author's observations in Amer-



ERNEST POOLE ("THE HARBOR"; MACMILLAN CO.)



BOOTH TARKINGTON ("THE TURMOIL"; HARPER AND BROS.)

for we care least of all, not because they are so critical, but because criticism is mostly only a repetition of what other English visitors have said of us. Only, Mr. Dickinson looks farther. He realizes that the America of to-day is the Europe of to-morrow—the cultural leveling which democracy is carrying on, the doubtful future of art, and all. We ourselves realize full well that the question is no longer, What will culture do for democracy, but, What will democracy do to culture? A richly suggestive little volume.

LIFE'S SEAMY SIDE  
With a Few Touches of Honor  
and Heroism.

ROMANCES OF THE PRESENT. By Thornton Hall, F. R. S. A. Author of "Love Affairs of the Republic of Europe," etc. With 16 illustrations. 8vo. Pp. vii, 352. Brentano's.

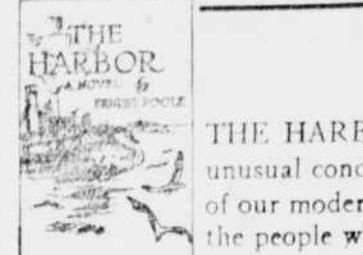
In the present case "romance" seems to denote chiefly the seamy side of life. The episodes related are chiefly expiations of indecency and shame. There may be some glamour attached to the picturesque amours of a king or a duke, but in truth they are no whit better than the debaucheries of the humbler of his subjects. The woman whose portrait forms the frontispiece of this handsome volume and whose career is related in its opening chapter may sound very grand under the titles of Countess of Castlemaine and Duchess of Cleveland, but the simple truth is that she was as shameless and as sordid as the vilest strumpet of Seven Dials. Most of the women and men of these romances are fitting companions for her. As for the exceptional ally able first novels as Ernest Poole's "The Harbor," reviewed in these columns a fortnight ago.

And now we have in "Blue Blood and Red" another American novel that, one hopes, will command the success which it so fully deserves. It is a stirring piece of work which for once—claim to be heard with some attention—claims to be a novel of the development of the young man's divided allegiance. It is between these three that the battle is fought out, a battle that is renewed every time a new generation of Americans has been disillusioned. Around these three are grouped a number of well seen characters—the family on the hill gravitating downward through mortgages, to insolvency, unable to help itself, hoping only that what remains will last till the death of its head; and, on the shore, the sturdy common people, some of whom are ascending the hill and planting new mansions there, much to the dismay of the old occupants; and this, too, is a characteristic Stateside touch. The Irish figure of these folk is a delightful piece, far more vital and important than the stock that has made his choice of their sophisticated congregations above. The promised solution of the whole problem at the end must leave for the author's account. One story line, that of the struggle of Patricia's waiting for the coming of her baby in the lonely farmhouse overlooking the waters of the bay is a remarkably tender piece of work.

THE SWORD OF YOUTH. By James Lane Allen. Edited by John Willcox Adams. 12mo. Pp. 261. The Century Company.

Mr. Allen's new story is a worthy epilogue to the history of the Civil War in fiction. Dealing with the last two years of the struggle, the book constantly foreshadows the courageous shoulders of heavy burdens by young soldiers, the resolute attempts by young heads and hands to rebuild shattered fortunes, to win the peace with the dawn of peace. It is a tale of the new generation in the stricken South. Its hero is a Kentucky boy, made a man by the loss of his father and brothers on the battlefield, by the service and care of his mother on their ruined plantation. For three years he has secretly cherished the resolution to join the armies when his seventeenth birthday shall have come. He carries it out against the mother's wishes, against her command. She typifies the old South, irreconcilable not only with the North, but with the new South as well, foreshadowed in this boy of hers who has done "nigger labor" ever since her slaves have deserted her, and whom for that reason she hates. A strong, proud woman, true daughter of the Kentucky pioneers, who does not live to see the old spirit, the old courage surviving in the new era, among new conditions, though she comes to recognize it before her death. The heroine, too, is but seventeen when the story opens, reflecting through its scenes and characters the great changes taking place in American ideals in the present generation.

Read "The Harbor"—it is the ablest novel added to American fiction in many a long year.



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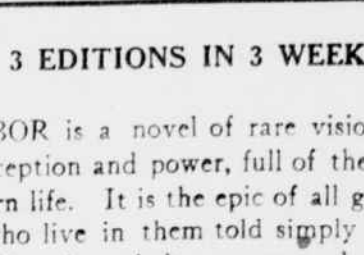
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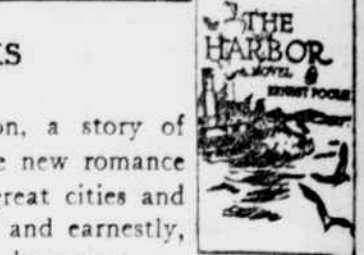
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